

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3890

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 3861

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH GR

SUBJ: NUCLEAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

REF A. STATE A-99 B. ATHENS 424

1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN REF A, WHICH INSTRUCTED THAT EMBASSY CITE C-S1-5-59578 IN REPLY, FOLLOW.

2. INFORMATION KEYED TO PARA 4, REF A - GAEC CURRENTLY UNDER GENERAL SUPERVISION OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND SCIENCE, BUT HAS A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF AUTONOMY. MINISTRY OF COORDINATION AND PLANNING HAS OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR GREEK ENERGY POLICY, WITH NATURAL ENERGY BOARD ITS KEY ADVISORY BODY. GAEC CHAIRMAN ZERVAS HAS RECENTLY RESIGNED, AND A SUCCESSOR HAS NOT YET BEEN NAMED. POSITION OF SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR IS ALSO VACANT. AS INDICATED ABOVE MINISTRY OF COORDINATION HAS OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY IN ENERGY MATTERS, AND HAS STRONG INTEREST IN PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF NUCLEAR PROGRAM. COORDINATION WITH PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION ON FUTURE NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM IS GOOD, WITHIN LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY SIZE AND TRAINING OF GAEC PERSONNEL. REF B PROVIDES RECENT REVIEW OF GREEK ENERGY RESEARCH BUDGET AND ACTIVITIES. ACCORDING TO GAEC OFFICIALS, PRACTICALLY ALL MEANINGFUL NUCLEAR RESEARCH IN GREECE IS BEING CONDUCTED AT OR THROUGH DEMOCRITOS.

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3. INFORMATION KEYED TO PARA 5, REF A. - EMBASSY WILL

FORWARD AN ORGANIZATION CHART OF DEMOCRITOS BY AIRPOUCH. DEMOCRITOS PRESENTLY HAS A BUDGET OF \$10 MILLION, WITH RESEARCH BEING CONDUCTED IN A WIDE VARIETY OF FIELDS - AGRONOMY, BIOLOGY, HYDROLOGY, HEALTH, PHYSICS, ET. AL. ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF THE BUDGET GOES FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH, MOST OF WHICH FOCUSES ON PURE RESEARCH ARATHER THAN TECHNOLOGICALLY OR PRACTICALLY ORIENTED WORK. ABOUT \$800,000 IS BUDGETED FOR THE DEMOCRITOS-UNDP URANIUM EXPLORATION PROJECT IN NORTHERN GREECE. (SEE PARA 5 OF THIS MESSAGE.) EXPANSION IS UNCERTAIN AT THE PRESENT TIME, SINCE KEY LEADERSHIP POSITIONS ARE VACANT. THERE HAS BEEN TALK OF A CONSIDERABLE ENLARGEMENT TO ENABLE THE GAEC TO PREPARE PROPERLY FOR THE PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION'S (PPC) FIRST NUCLEAR POWER PLANT. THE PROGRAM HAS NOT YET RECEIVED OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION, BUT THE PPC HAS SIGNED A CONDITIONAL ENRICHMENT AGREEMENT WITH ERDA, AND IS UN-OFFICIALLY PLANNING TO PUT ITS FIRST NUCLEAR UNIT INTO OPERATION IN 1986. GAEC WILL BE CHARGED WITH LICENSING AUTHORITY, AND WITH THE FORMULATION AND APPLICATION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS, A ROLE IT WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO PERFORM WITH ITS LIMITED CURRENT STAFF. NO SUCH EXPANSION COULD TAKE PLACE WITHOUT THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE GOG. WITH RESPECT TO MORALE AT DEMOCRITOS, THERE HAS BEEN SOME FRICTION BETWEEN YOUNGER, OVERSEAS TRAINED SCIENTISTS AND THEIR OLDER, GREEK TRAINED COLLEAGUES. IN FACT, DEMOCRITOS HAS EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTIES IN ATTRACTING OR KEEPING FIRST RATE SCIENTISTS WITH OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE. THE CENTER HAS LACKED DIRECTION TO SOME DEGREE, PERHAPS PARTIALLY BECAUSE THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND SCIENCE HAS TENDED TO EMPHASIZE THE FORMER RATHER THAN THE LATTER. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON PERSONNEL DUE TO POLITICAL OR BUDGETARY LIMITATIONS, BUT IT IS OUR IM-PRESSION THAT FOREIGN CONTACTS HAVE BEEN VERY LARGELY WESTERN ORIENTED. GAEC PARTICIPATES IN PROGRAM OF INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY, CEAN - EUROPEAN NUCLEAR PHYSICS GROUP, OECD'S NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY, NATO CCMS SOLAR ENERGY PROGRAM. GREECE HAS AGREEMENT CONCERNING CIVIL USES OF ATOMIC ENERGY DATING TO AUGUST, 1955, AND, CONFIDENTIAL

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OF COURSE, RECEIVED THE FUEL FOR DEMOCRITOS FROM THE US.

4. INFORMATION KEYED TO PARA 6, REF A. - EMBASSY HAS UNDER PREPARATION FOR EARLY SUBMISSION REVIEW OF ENERGY SECTOR WHICH WILL INCLUDE EXAMINATION OF NUCLEAR POWER PROGRAM AND ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD.

5. INFORMATION KEYED TO PARA 7. - THE DEMOCRITOS-NATIONAL

INSTITUTE OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESEARCH - IAEA - UNDP
PROGRAM TO LOCATE AND DEFINE AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT
URANIUM POTENTIAL IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN MACEDONIA AND
THRACE, WHICH BEGAN IN 1971, HAS BEEN EXTENDED THROUGH
THE END OF 1976. NO ECONOMICALLY EXPLOITABLE URANIUM
DEPOSITS HAVE YET BEEN LOCATED, BUT SEVERAL PROMISING
AREAS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION.
A MORE DETAILED OUTLINE OF RESULTS, SUPPLIED BY
LOCAL UNDP OFFICIALS, FOLLOWS BY AIRPOUCH. STEARNS

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